

present, as they have almost wholly disappeared ; but they consisted, apparently, of varieties of form, (not of substance), containing the same hymns and formulae arranged in a different order, according to the conceptions of the teacher respecting their historical succession or liturgical value, or according to differences in the mode of their recitation,—some being recited audibly, some repeated inaudibly, and some being chanted or sung. Various readings, also, seem to have been followed by different schools, although not to such an extent as materially to affect the identity between the original and its descendant. Of the *Sanhitas* of the *Mig-Veda* the only one now in use is that ascribed to a teacher named VEDAMITBA or SAKALYA. Whether the authorities which profess to detail the multiplicity of these compilations be entitled to entire confidence may be matter of question; but the traditions are concurrent and consistent; and there can be little doubt that there was a time at which the collection, and classification, and study, of the religious poems, which, even then, bore the stamp of antiquity, did form an important and popular branch of the

literature of the Brahmins, and must have
been pursued, with extraordinary diligence, zeal,
and ability, through a protracted interval, anterior to
the rise of
philosophical speculation, mythological
fable, poetical
legends, and traditional history/

^a The foundation of the *Vedanta* philosophy, and the
compilation
of the *Itihdsas* and *Purdnas*, are, also, ascribed to
Vydsa. It would
be out of place to enter into any examination of the
question here,